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## THE PARK

Nauvoo State Park, acquired by the state in 1948, lies along Route 96 on the south edge of Nauvoo in Hancock County. The 148 acre park includes a 13 acre lake with a maximum depth of 26 feet and a shoreline of 1 mile.

In 1844 Nauvoo was Illinois' largest city with a population of 27,000. Today, however, it has less than 1,500 people. The community is noted for its historic background, beautiful surroundings, extensive vineyards and its wines and cheese.

## HISTORY

**Indian:** Nauvoo was once a Fox Indian village called Quashquema. By a treaty in 1824, the Indians relinquished their Illinois lands. Captain James White, the first settler, wishing to obtain the village site of 400 to 500 lodges, gave the Indians 200 sacks of corn for the land.

The first post office in Hancock County was established here in 1830 under the name of Venus. In 1834 the town of Commerce was established and Venus was absorbed into it.

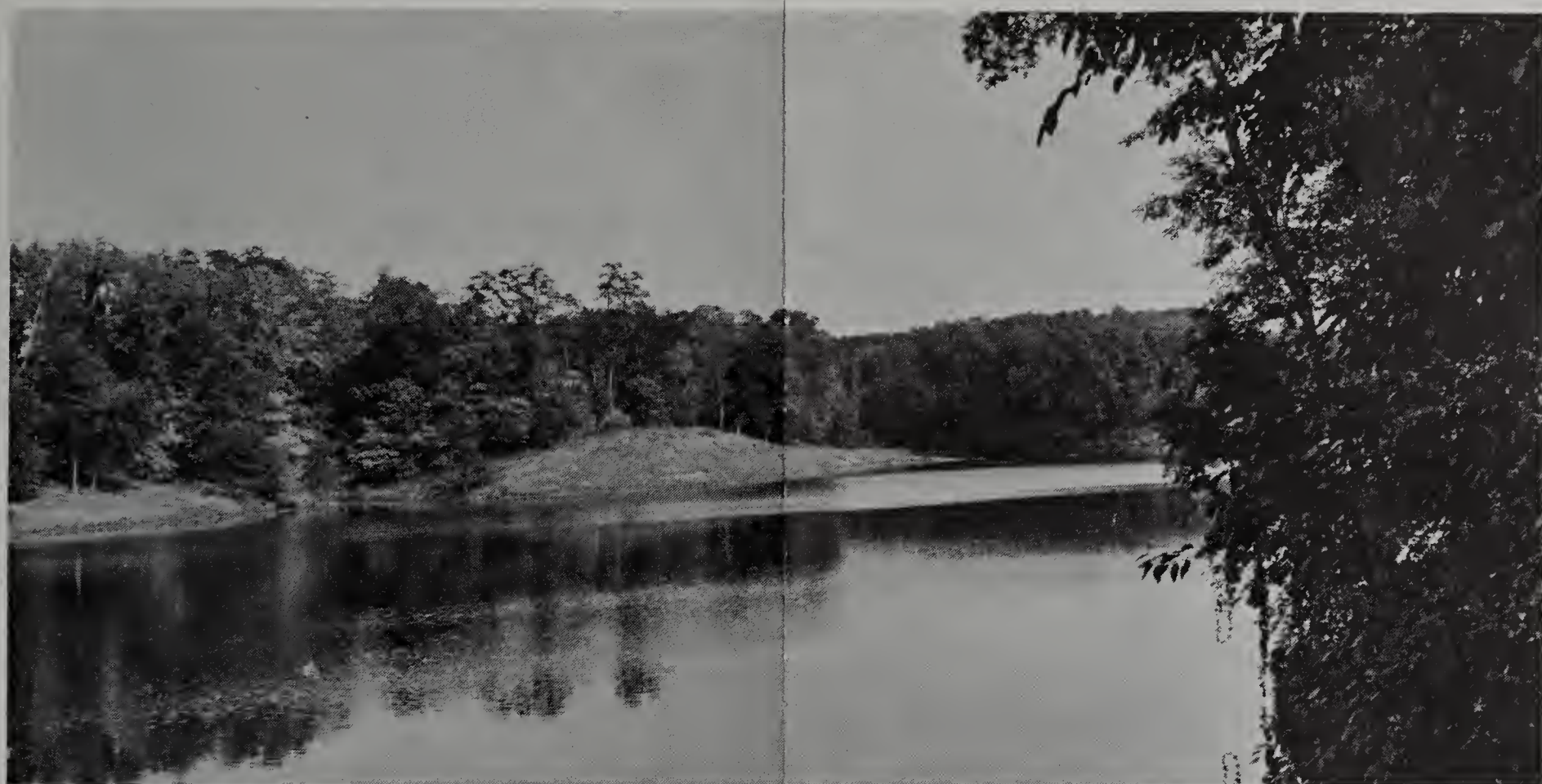
**Mormons:** After the Mormons were driven out of Missouri they came to Commerce in 1839, changing the name of the community to Nauvoo. This name is said to be from the Hebrew and means "beautiful place" or "pleasant land." The town was incorporated and given a special charter by the Illinois legislature.

The Mormons energetically began to build their city, and industrial and commercial activity flourished. Prophet Joseph Smith, founder of Nauvoo and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, had sent missionaries like Brigham Young to England and other countries and they caused large migrations to the city.

With the rapid growth of the city, Nauvoo became a rendezvous for criminals and during 1844 and 1845 outlawry ran rampant. The Mormons were blamed and in most cases unjustly.

Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum, were shot and killed by a mob in the Hancock County jail at Carthage in 1844 while supposedly under state protection.





Because of their religious ideas and political activities, the Mormons were in sharp conflict with their non-Mormon neighbors. The situation reached a climax in 1846 and they were driven from Illinois as they had been from Missouri. Under different leaders some went to Michigan, others to Utah and Texas and a few, including the family of Joseph Smith, remained in Nauvoo.

**The Temple:** Joseph Smith, following a revelation in 1841, began the erection of the great temple. Although incomplete, it was first used for services in 1844. Because of Smith's death in 1844, however, the temple was never completed. Then in 1848 an incendiary burned the temple. A sunstone (cover) of the one of the pilasters can be seen in the state park. Other remains of the temple have been incorporated into Nauvoo buildings.

Said to have been the finest building in the west at the time, the cost of the materials used in the temple are estimated to have been \$1,000,000.

**Icarians:** Following the Mormon exodus the city almost became a ghost town. In the spring of 1849 a small party of Frenchmen and Germans who called themselves the "Pioneers of Humanity" took possession of the many vacant houses for their communistic colony.

Their leader was Etienne Cabet, a noted lawyer and French political figure. He authored several books including the story of an utopian community, "A Voyage into Icaria." This book gave the members of this community the name Icarians.

In a few years they found the communistic idea unworkable and the colony broke up. Cabet and a few followers went to St. Louis, others joined a similar colony in Corning, Iowa, and a number remained in the vicinity.

The Icarians introduced the growing of grapes and the making of wine. Some of the former wine cellars are now used in the manufacture of Blue Cheese (Roquefort type), which has nationwide fame.

**Rheinberger Home:** Originally Mormon built with additions during the Icarian days, the Rheinberger home has one of the first wine cellars in the community. The home has been restored by the state and is located in the park as a museum. Adjoining the home is one of the early vineyards that has been growing grapes since the mid 1800's.

**Pageant:** When the grapes ripen each year in September there is enacted in the park over Labor Day weekend a popular pageant which portrays, in part, the old French rite known as the "Wedding of the Wine and Cheese."





Rheinberger Home

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . . .

Admittance will not be granted groups of 25 or more persons to any state park or conservation area unless permission from the park ranger has been secured to use the facilities. It is also required that groups of minors have adequate supervision and that at least one responsible adult accompany each group not exceeding 15 minors. All pets must be on a leash.

Numerous state parks and memorials are within easy access of every part of the state. Lodges, cabins and dining rooms are important features of Illinois Beach, Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest and Giant City. Reservations for lodging should be made with the lodge managers.

All state parks are open the year round. When weather conditions necessitate the closing of park roads during freezing and thawing periods, access to park facilities is by foot only.

For further information concerning Illinois State Parks and Memorials write to the Department of Conservation, Division of Education, State Office Building, Springfield, 62706.

### FACILITIES

**Picnicking:** Several areas are scattered throughout the park equipped with tables and stoves. Playground equipment and one shelter house are available.

**Fishing and Boating:** The lake is stocked with largemouth bass, channel catfish and bluegill. A boat launch is available but there are no boat docks or rentals.

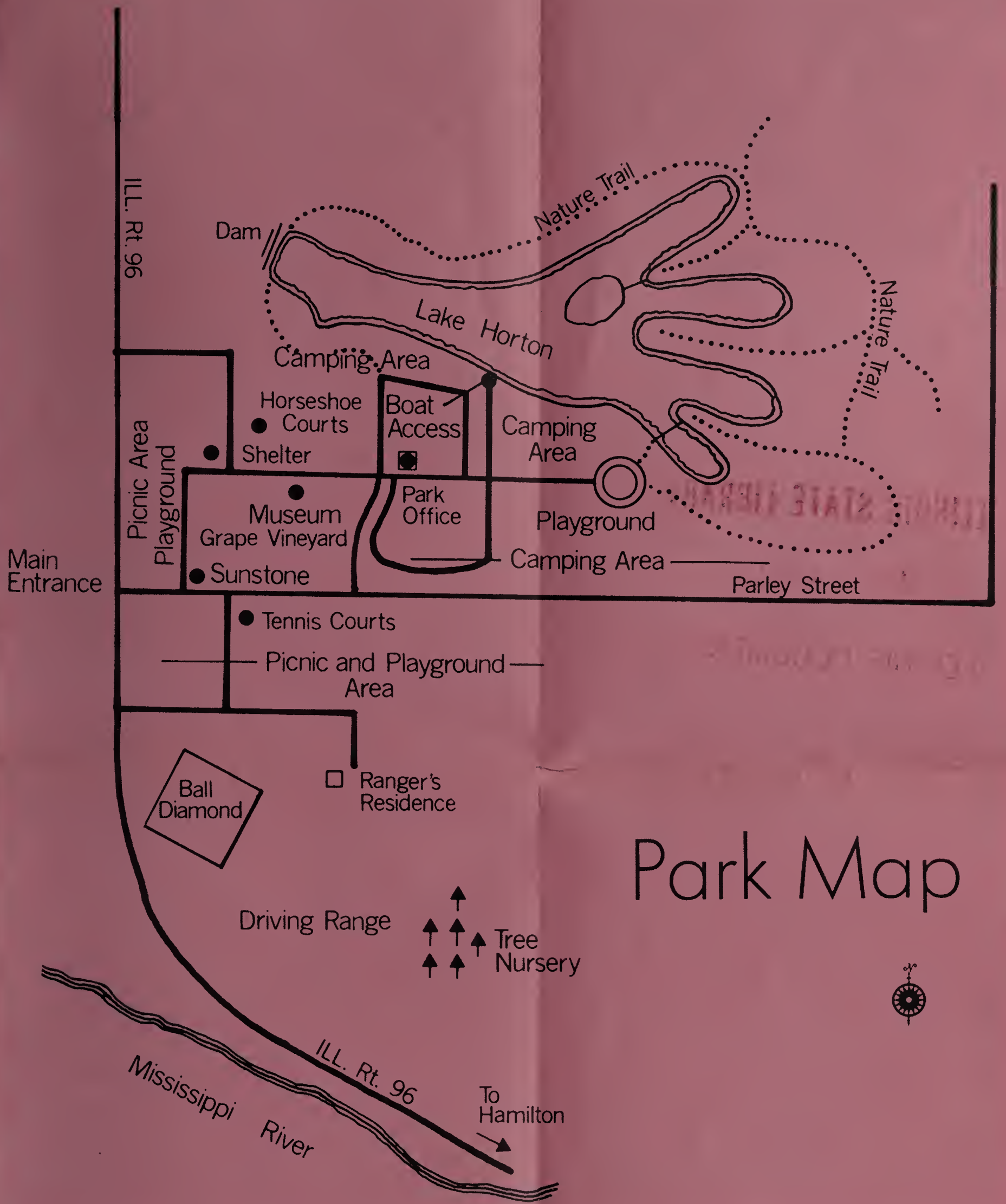
**Camping:** There are three areas both for tent and trailers, with limited electricity and a sanitary station available for trailers. Two youth group areas are provided but reservations are asked to be made in advance. All campers need to secure a permit from the park ranger.

**Trails:** Small trails wind around the lake and the visitor can hike through any of the woods in the park. A variety of animals and trees can be seen in the woods.

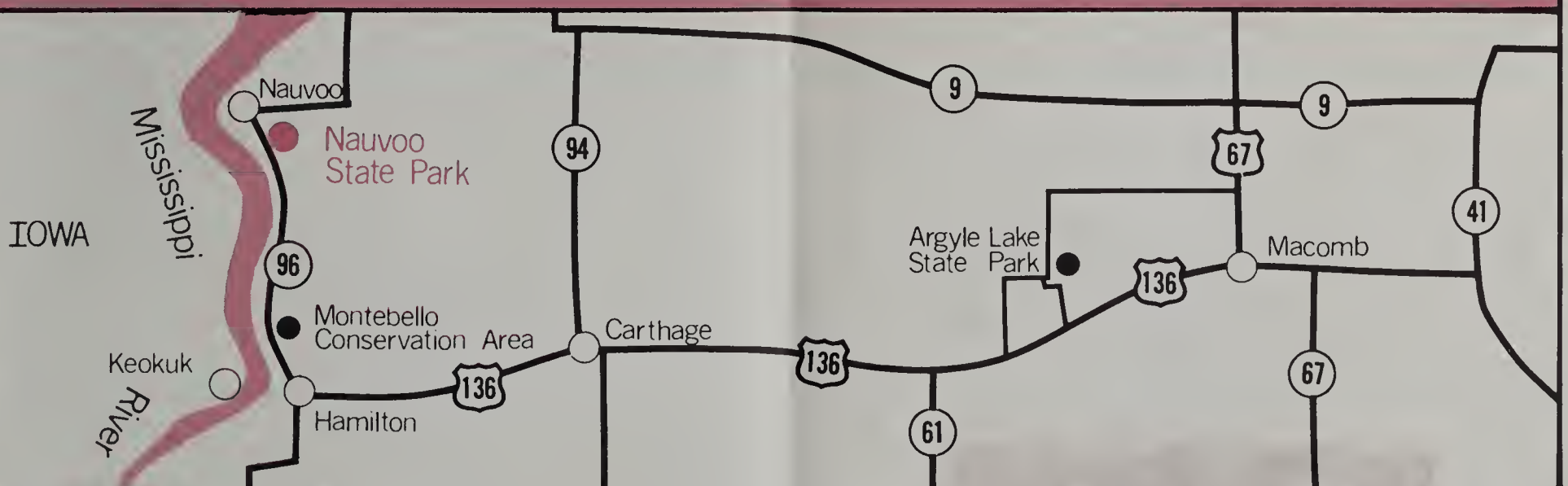
**Winter Sports:** Ice-skating on the lake and sledding on the slope of the dam is permitted.

**Other:** The park also contains a golf driving range, horseshoes and a baseball diamond.





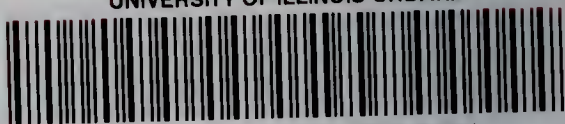
# Park Map



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